CONVOY DISPATCH

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975 — July/Aug. 1999 # 178

¡Sí Se Puede!

IBP Strikers Say, 'We Can Do It!'

As *Convoy-Dispatch* goes to press, 1,300 Local 556 members in Pasco, Wash., are on strike against Iowa Beef Processing, in the largest Teamster strike in the nation.

The strike is a David vs. Goliath battle that pits a rainbow coalition of immigrant workers from Mexico, El Salvador, Bosnia, Russia, Vietnam, and Laos against the largest processor of beef and pork products in the world.

"Workers here have been abused and taken advantage of by this company for years, and now we're fighting back" said striker Raymundo González L. "We stand together. And I ask Teamsters across the country to stand with us."

This strike for justice deserves the full backing of our International Union. Tens of thousands of Teamster members work for national and multinational food processing corporations. The IBP strike is a challenge to our International Union leadership to win a local strike with a united, coordinated national strategy.

Workers are fighting for a contract that includes fair wage increases, treatment with respect and dignity, and safer and more sanitary working conditions.

The strike began when workers walked out of the plant on Friday, June 4 after management fired shop floor leaders, including Chief Shop Steward Maria Martínez, who were legally protesting unsafe working conditions.

The strike was officially sanctioned by the Teamsters Union the following week on June 9 after workers voted in favor of a strike by a margin of 847 to 291.

"IBP forced us to walk out to defend ourselves," Martínez said. "The company runs the line at speeds that make injuries and unsanitary conditions inevitable. We are on strike to protect the workers and the public."

For more information on the IBP strike, see page 8.

The IBP picket line looks like the United Nations with strikers from the U.S., Mexico, El Salvador, Bosnia, Russia, Vietnam and Laos. "We are from many countries, but we are one union," said striker Guillermina Martínez.

Want a Stronger Union?

- Do you want to learn your rights on the job and in the union?
- Do you want information on what's happening in your industry and in the Teamsters Union?
- Do you want help in getting a better contract, holding your officers accountable, or protecting your rights on the job?

YOU NEED TO JOIN TDU

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Company _____

❑ City ❑ Road ❑ Dock ❑ Clerical ❑ Warehouse ❑ Construction ❑ Production

other _____

___ $35 one-year membership & subscription to *Convoy Dispatch.*

___ $85 three-year membership fee. ($10 shall be rebated to the local chapter)

___ $20 for spouses, and Teamsters who gross less than $17,000 a year.

___ $20 for retirees. Retired from Local ____ .

Check or money order

Mastercard/Visa # _____ Exp. date ___/____

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential from employers. TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers.

More News Inside ...

UPS Subcontracting
Rail merger used as excuse to violate contract..... p. 3

Freight Grievance Panels
Ohio panel's record shows need for reform..... p. 4

Tentative Carhaul Agreement
Hoffa's first test shows weak results..... p. 5

Nepotism Returns to Chicago
Billy Hogan back on Local 714 payroll ..... p. 7

Northwest Flight Attendants
Members debate merits of proposed contract..... p. 9

Letters From Our Members

Carhaulers: Say No to Flex Workweek

As a mechanic with Allied Automotive Group, I have had the opportunity to talk with drivers from a number of terminals about our carhaul contract. Opinions are divided and mixed.

Drivers have remarked that the mechanics and yardmen in their terminals are quite upset that Mr. Hoffa seems to have overlooked them. Those at the bottom of the seniority lists with young children are commenting that he lost sight of his promise of "no flex work week to destroy weekends and undermine family life."

Does everyone in the carhaul industry understand what the companies' goal is here? They are using "divide and conquer" to break our great union apart. I believe they can do so, if we allow a contract with flex work week language.

We need to stop this company strategy before it gets out of hand. This is, I believe, what your organization is all about.

Steve Hulme
Local 449, Allied Automotive Group
Buffalo

Las Vegas Hotel Workers Lose Union Hiring Hall

The officers of Las Vegas Local 995, who represent hotel/casino workers, boasted in their last campaign literature that they have "negotiated superior contracts without concessions" among their many other accomplishments. It's hard to read these claims with a straight face.

In our most recent contract negotiations, our leaders have succeeded in giving away the hiring hall as a means of dispatching members to employers.

When questioned about where this anti-labor move came from, Local 995 Secretary-Treasurer Mike Magnani told us that the culinary workers union led the way for us.

Let's stop blaming other unions for what is obviously a lack of leadership in our own local.

Next election, Local 995 members need to keep our eyes and ears on the alert for candidates who will have the members' best interests at heart.

Joe Piazza
Local 995, Riviera Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas

Members First?

At our January Local 439 membership meeting, I made a motion that a list of all companies represented by our local be made available to members. Out of work members could use the list to look for union jobs. Other locals in our area make such a list available, at little cost to the local.

Our secretary-treasurer spoke against the motion and it was defeated 19 to 16.

The meeting ended with a racing trophy that was sponsored by the local to the tune of $750.

Is this putting the members first?

Timothy Fleming
Local 439, Noll Manufacturing
Stockton, Calif.

Union Removes Strong Steward

I am a member of New Orleans Local 270 at the UPS Earhart Center. Louisiana is not a strong union area. But we have a union leader at our center. Mike Solomon does everything he can to educate and inform us about how to defend our rights and take on UPS.

Because Mike did so much to help us, the local appointed him as our shop steward. Mike gained a reputation as the best steward we had ever had.

Last fall the local removed Mike as steward, along with several other stewards who had supported an opposition slate in the local election.

When I confronted my BA, Jerry Tolbert, he told me that Mike wasn't loyal and couldn't be trusted to represent the members.

A petition protesting Mike's removal was signed by 132 members. Since Mike was removed, UPS has refused to follow the contract, and Tolbert has been inept at enforcing it. We need the right to elect our stewards so we can get Mike back to stand up to the company.

Members at the Earhart Center want to thank Mike for all he has done on our behalf, and TDU for the help they have given us.

Jerry Guidry
Local 270, UPS
New Orleans

UPS Southern Pension Credits

Many Teamsters in the South are victims of a sweetheart deal made years ago with UPS, and it's costing us our pension credits. We need justice.

From 1967 to 1974 UPS management got a "free ride" in the South with no pension contributions made for those years. So when the Central States Pension Fund later changed to "contribution credits," an agreement was made in 1987 to count those years as contribution years.

That corrected the problem for many Teamsters, but those of us who left UPS before August 1987 to work at other Teamster jobs were left out of it. We're accumulating credits with Central States with our current jobs, but have been denied contributory credit for our work with UPS during these "gap" years, as the Pension Fund refers to them.

I should mention that a few lucky former UPS employees did get their credits converted to contribution credits. Nine Teamster officials who left UPS employment before August 1987 (just like myself and lots of other rank and file Teamsters) got taken care of. The lucky nine covered by a special deal include Central States Trustee George Westley, and International Vice President Ken Wood.

If these officials can get contributory credit for their work at UPS from 1967 to 1974, then other former UPS employees should, too.

Myself and others who have been denied by the fund have taken our case to Congress, the Department of Labor, the Pension Welfare and Benefits Administration, and the Treasury Department.

If you worked for UPS between 1967 and 1974 in the South and left UPS employment before 1987, we would like to hear from you.

We just want fair treatment for all Teamsters.

Malcolm Rice, Local 728, Yellow
7401 Driftwood Ave.
Savannah, Ga. 31406-4224
E-mail: MalcomR13@aol.com

TDU International Steering Committee

Co-Chairs:
Dan Campbell, Chicago, Local 705
Joe Fahey, Watsonville, Calif., Local 912
Diana Kilmury, Vancouver, B.C., Local 155
Michael Savwoir, Kansas City, Mo., Local 41

Organizer:
Ken Paff, Detroit

Trustees:
Steve Baudo, Milwaukee Local 344
Erik Jensen, Minneapolis Local 320
Joyce Mims, Atlanta Local 728 spouse

Members:
Homer Lambert, Chicago Local 743
Matt Latzo, Baltimore Local 355
Maria Martinez, Pasco, Wash., Local 556
Ashley McNeely, Minneapolis Local 2000
Raul Rodriguez, Jr., Los Angeles Local 630
Michael Ruscigno, New York Local 802
Willie Smith, Columbus, Ohio Local 413

Alternates:
Robert Lloyd, Little Rock, Ark., Local 878
Alex Adams, Cleveland Local 407
Tom Sheibley, Brockton, Mass., Local 653

How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at the address below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters.

National Office: P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich., 48210. Phone: (313) 842-2600. Fax: (313) 842-0227.
TDU can be contacted by e-mail at: tdudetroit@igc.org
or on the World Wide Web at: http://www.igc.org/tdu/

NY Office: P.O. Box 170131, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217 Phone: (718) 624-7746. Fax: (718) 875-9336

Copyright © 1999 by Teamsters for a Democratic Union. Contents may be reprinted by labor unions or rank and file organizations for use in the promotion of union democracy. Employers and all others may not use these materials without the specific, written permission of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. If material is used, its source, TDU *Convoy Dispatch*, must be cited.

Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in November 1998 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had over 500 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed up by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

Massive Contract Violation

UPS Subcontracts Thousands of Loads

As of mid-June, UPS management is violating the contract by subcontracting out thousands of feeder loads every day. Their excuse is a disruption of rail service caused by the merger of Conrail's operations into CSX and Norfolk Southern railroads.

The brokers are all over the Midwest and the East. One Cleveland feeder driver counted 98 UPS boxes being pulled by brokers in just two nights on the Ohio Turnpike. Chicago's Bedford Heights terminal looks like a broker yard, with cardboard signs helping direct all the nonunion traffic. At St. Louis, a majority of rail traffic is being pulled by nonunion brokers. Brokers are lined up at the Meadowlands, N.J., hub to pick up loads. And so on.

Hundreds of potential Teamster jobs are being stolen. Whether this violation is short term or not, it is serious.

Article 26 requires management to make "every effort" to use UPS employees for our work. They have made no effort, although they did plan for the disruption and had nonunion brokers lined up. They did not set up feeder schools to train more package car drivers. They did not rent tractors and use feeder-qualified drivers. They did not ask local unions to provide out-of-work Teamsters.

In short, they made NO effort, not EVERY effort.

Article 26 Grievances

Members should file grievances on Article 26. Local unions should demand immediate enforcement and fast action on the grievances. In the Central Region, our contract provides that we have the right to strike over deadlocked grievances, so real muscle could be used if necessary.

The International Union needs to coordinate a plan to stop the job theft and enforce our contract. So far, nothing has been done. In fact, Hoffa's Parcel Director, Dick Heck, sent out a Titan message on June 15 that repeated (in detail) the company line, and said that Heck had "requested" that the company "inform" the union of its plans. Nothing about our jobs, or about any action he would take to enforce our contract.

Members and local unions need to demand that Article 26 be enforced and our jobs protected. And we need to demand that Heck get out of management's bed and work for us.

This may be a short term violation, but it also may be a foot in the door to bring back the "shiny wheels" that we effectively struck to eliminate.

Chicago Airborne Teamsters Win

Chicago Local 705's 700 Airborne Teamsters have won a contract that is far superior to the national Airborne settlement pattern.

The five-year contract, which is retroactive to April 1, 1998, contains wage increases of 50¢-50¢-50¢-45¢-45¢. This is $2.40 over the same period that the NMFA got $1.40. The national contract also had a wage freeze and a $750 bonus in the first year.

Pension and health and welfare payments are also at a higher level than the NMFA: $1.85 instead of $1.45, to provide a bigger pension increase.

In addition, the Chicago Teamsters won an additional sick day, grievance procedure improvements, a prohibition on the company requiring employees to burn vacation or sick leave for FMLA time, and a prohibition on requiring employees to burn FMLA time when they are on workers' comp.

This contract should set a standard useful in bringing all Airborne contracts upward.

Ups and Downs

Local 710 Members Reject PPO Health Plan.

UPS Teamsters in Illinois and Indiana rejected UPS's proposal to put them under a PPO health plan by a vote of 1,924 to 1,879. The plan would have forced members into a provider network that would have saved millions for UPS.

The original vote was overturned because UPS had not sent ballots to 1,200 eligible members, there was no procedure to verify eligibility of those returning ballots, and because returned ballots could be seen through the envelopes.

Michigan UPS Stewards Launch Network.

Stewards and members from three Michigan locals launched a statewide stewards network in June. The network's first focus is to exchange and share information about grievances to build support for much needed grievance reform.

Communication and connections between stewards is the best weapon in taking on UPS. If you want to set up a network in your state, contact TDU.

Shifter Helps Broker In Need.

A shifter at the UPS hub in Bedford Park, Ill., near Chicago may have saved a broker driver's life. The subcontractor was injured when his own tractor rolled back on him. The shifter jumped in the tractor and pulled it forward. The driver was rushed to the hospital. If the loads had been handled by properly trained UPS employees this incident may have been avoided.

UPSers Meet at New York TDU Educational Conference.

Members and stewards from New York Local 804 and New Jersey Local 177 met with Chicago Local 705 President John McCormick at a recent TDU conference in New York City. They discussed common issues like production harassment, grievance problems and building more member involvement. They also planned to increase *Convoy Dispatch* circulation in the metro area. UPS members thank Brother McCormick for his commitment to assisting the members.

Countdown to July 31

Hoffa Meets With UPS on Full-Time Jobs

UPS's top labor man, Jim Maloney, has secretly met with James Hoffa to try to convince him to give away what Teamster members won in our 1997 strike. Management knows they cannot win the arbitration case and will be forced to live up to the agreement they signed.

Under the contract UPS signed to end our strike, the company is required to create 2,000 new full-time inside jobs each year by combining part-time jobs.

The first 2,000 were due by July 31, 1998, and the second 2,000 are due by this July 31. But UPS has refused to live by the contract, hoping that maybe Hoffa will cut them a better deal now that he is in.

What UPS Teamsters Are Owed:

- 4,000 full-time jobs.
- Back pay, estimated at $40 million, for delaying 2,000 of those for a year.
- No give backs in return for these jobs we are owed.
- Fair distribution of the jobs across the country.

Safe Handling of Over-70 lb. Packages

Injuries incurred while handling packages are very common at UPS. An on-the-job injury can mean major financial hardship for you and your family. Thus it is critically important to enforce the rights afforded to you under Article 44 when handling over-70s. Below are some important points to help prevent injuries:

1. Always ask for help when handling over-70s. Our contract provides you with the right to ask for Teamster help in lifting packages over 70 pounds. Don't be pressured into giving up this right and putting yourself at risk.

Drivers picking up or delivering over-70s on their route must accept customer help if it is offered and the driver believes that the customer can safely assist. In the absence of safe customer assistance, management must send a member to assist you or may not require you to move the package. You must go to the customer's location and assess whether they are fit to assist you.

2. Ask for a lifting device to get overweights into tricky spots. The contract provides for UPS to provide both a lifting device — pallet lift, forklift or liftgate, for example — and Teamster help.

3. Make sure packages are properly marked to protect yourself and others. If you pick up an unmarked package that you think weighs over 70 pounds, check the weight and, if over 70, place a yellow sticker on it. If a customer routinely fails to mark overweight packages tell your supervisor to notify them of their obligation to do so.

If you find an unmarked overweight in the building, stop the package's progress, make sure it gets properly marked, and fill out an improper shipping practice card.

4. Keep overweights off the belts unless they are the only packages on the belt. If one is found on the belt, stop the belt, get help, remove the package, and restart the belt.

If overweight packages on belts is a recurring problem, file a grievance asking for management to ensure that packages are handled as irregulars. If your building doesn't have a separate irregulars system, then make sure overweights are segregated from regular volume. The contract prohibits co-mingling of overweights on conveyor belts.

5. Educate members about the risks of overweights. Encourage all members to enforce their rights. The contract requires that UPS routinely train members on safe handling of overweights.

For more advice on handling overweights and enforcing your rights, contact TDU.

Ohio Freight Grievance Panels Show Poor Record

Ohio Panels' Standings in the Cellar

The Ohio Joint State Committee freight panels have to be among the worst in the nation. The grievance meetings held on May 20 and 21 are typical of how employers dominate the union and unfailingly get their way at the state panel. Of 27 decisions, the union won two; the freight companies won 19; four were compromises (typically unjust discharges turned into suspensions, with no back pay) and there was one deadlock. In addition, 41 grievances were withdrawn and 66 were held to the next meeting.

Imagine a prize fighter with a record of 2-19-4. No matter what the odds, don't bet on him. He's a bum!

The union members of the Ohio freight panels are appointed by Vice President and Ohio Conference President Les Singer. The Over-The-Road Main Committee was comprised of Dennis Weinert (Dayton Local 957), Steve Waitman (Lima Local 908), and Charles Givens (Mansfield Local 40). Sub-Committee 1 was comprised of Roger Hunt and Bob Jackson of Canton Local 92, Doug Davis (Dayton Local 957) and Ron Wickerman. The Local Cartage Committee includes some of the above as well as Bill Lichtenwald and Scott Klingler (Toledo Local 20) and Mickey Mader from Akron Local 24.

The Ohio freight panels are notorious for never awarding a grievant back pay no matter how meritorious the grievance. As one panel member told an unfairly discharged grievant who was returned to work without back pay, "Well, we have to give the company something."

Walter Tresko, a driver for Yellow Freight in Cleveland Local 407, fared even worse. In compliance with DOT regulations, Tresko had declined to take out a truck that had an exhaust leak under the cab until the leak was fixed. Three other drivers and a mechanic confirmed the exhaust leak. The company refused to fix the leak, took him out of service and later discharged him, terming it a "voluntary quit" for "refusing to follow reasonable work instruction." The panel upheld the discharge in a unanimous decision.

"It didn't seem like anybody on that committee really cared about my grievance or my job. Not one union member of the panel asked any questions. Three minutes after they sent us out of the room to go into executive session they called us back to tell me the committee had upheld my 'voluntary quit'," Tresko said. With the help of the Truckers Justice Center Tresko has filed an OSHA complaint to win his job back.

Why do our union grievance panel members hold the company to even lower safety standards than the federal government?

Ohio Freight Panel Stats — May 1999

Wins	Losses	Compromises
2	19	4

In addition, 41 were withdrawn and 66 held to the next meeting.

Can anyone find a worse record for a freight panel? *If so, please supply details to TDU.*

CF Driver Fired Over Safety Gets Job Back

CF management in Manchester, N.H., thought they could get away with firing driver George Carter for refusing to drive when fatigued. Just to make sure it stuck they also gave him a letter and a suspension for delaying freight.

But CF clearly failed to anticipate the tenacity of Carter, his wife, Sandy, and steward Dan O'Neil. Carter contacted TDU soon after his discharge and worked with TDU staff on an article for *Convoy Dispatch* ("Driver Safety Activists Fight CF Harassment," *CD* #177).

"The article got a lot of attention," Carter said. "TDU also helped with a petition, told us about our rights under the Whistleblower Act and put us in touch with the Truckers Justice Center."

The New Hampshire State Police also took an interest, apparently tired of getting phone calls week after week from drivers and other members of the public about CF's safety violations.

Terminal manager John Grimanis, the man responsible for CF's poor safety and labor relations record in New Hampshire, was finally in the spotlight.

"We had safety men here from all over the country," O'Neil said. "They were forced by publicity to grab hold of the situation. And the petition really helped to unify things. We got 99 percent participation — all but one man — plus 10 UPS drivers on my route who signed in solidarity. With the help of TDU and Local 633, we've turned things around for the better."

On June 21 Carter got his record cleared and his discharge reduced to a one-day suspension.

In the coming weeks Carter and O'Neil will be settling other safety issues.

They also plan to host a barbecue on July 3 and start a TDU chapter in their area.

"We look forward to seeing everyone at the TDU Convention in November," Carter said. "We went to the New England TDU Conference and loved it, and we'll be in Cleveland for the convention."

$200 Million Deal

Yellow Buys Jevic

"We are building a national nonunion LTL regional system," Maurice Myers, Yellow Corp CEO, told *Traffic World*, an industry publication.

For $200 million Yellow has purchased Jevic Transportation, a Northeast regional carrier. Jevic in the East now joins Saia in the Southeast, WestEx in California and the Southwest, and Action Express in the Northwest and Rocky Mountain areas in rounding out Yellow's regional nonunion LTL system.

After having sold off Preston to its managers, this effectively constitutes a swap of union for nonunion carriers to fill Yellow's Northeast niche.

With Yellow following in the footsteps of CF's creation of the Con-Way system, this raises a number of serious concerns among Yellow's rank and file Teamsters. Will their work be diverted to Yellow's new nonunion subsidiary? Will Yellow expend its capital and attention on its nonunion network while union employees are left to drive junk in a deteriorating system? Will Yellow isolate the unionized portion of the company and sell it off? History suggests all of these are legitimate concerns.

The other important question is for the union leadership. Cleveland Yellow driver Al Adams asks, "Is Hoffa going to organize in freight, including these double-breasted outfits?" So far the Hoffa administration has cut back on organizing and stressed organizing among health care workers, that will do nothing to build Teamster strength in our core industries.

Yellow Change of Ops on Hold

Yellow's big change of operations has been stopped, at least for now, after the panel deadlocked over it in June. Yellow wants to run team operations over top of established relays, in violation of the contract. Yellow also wants to run Buffalo to Chicago, which cannot be done legally. Freight director Phil Young gave the main union presentation. The ball is in Yellow's court now.

Canadian Carhaul Contract

Focus on Pension, Health and Welfare Improvements

Dave McPherson
Local 938, Gen-Auto Shippers
Oshawa, Ont.

With the Canadian Eastern Car Carrier Contract due to expire Oct. 31, 1999, member interest is escalating. Surprisingly, a wage increase is not the highest priority with most members. The main issues appear to be improvements in pension and health and welfare, which have remained virtually stagnant since 1984.

The pension plan needs major improvements when compared to U.S. plans. Recently, a member of our plan retired with 38 years of service and now receives a pension of approximately $1,600 (Canadian) per month. Fortunately, this member is over age 65, so he will also receive a small monthly benefit from the federal government. Now, with income taxes so high and the threat of losing government benefits looming in the future, members see the need for improved pensions.

Our health and welfare plan needs immediate attention in two areas: weekly income and long-term disability benefits. Weekly income (sick pay) is $413 a week (Canadian) before deductions, and is paid for up to 15 weeks. After the 15-week period, an employee would then apply for long-term disability and enroll in the federal government's Employment Insurance Plan. Long-term disability is $750 a month, and is paid for up to five years. The government Employment Insurance benefits supplement the members' income at $413 a week for up to one year. Once the one-year period has expired, the member receives $750 a month for the remaining four years. Members can also apply for a disability pension if permanently disabled.

Other contract concerns include getting elected pension fund trustees, improved job security, better dental plan coverage, and unlike the U.S. tentative agreement, no concessions.

Carhaul Contract Proposal Falls Short

"This is my first contract and if you don't think I'm going to negotiate a great one, you're crazy."

— James Hoffa
speaking in Detroit on March 28, 1999

The Teamster tentative carhaul contract of June 2, 1999, has been widely seen both inside and outside the Teamsters Union as a test of the Teamster leadership of James Hoffa. This contract analysis and comparison is a detailed, factual review of the contract and comparison to the previous two carhaul contracts.

Does this contract measure up?

Monetary Package

The monetary settlement includes both wages and benefits (pension and health and welfare contributions). The settlement does not contain any improvements in holidays, sick days, vacation time or other benefits that would add to the monetary package.

For the first time ever for a carhaul contract, there is a "bonus" and wage freeze instead of an increase in the base wage for the first year of the contract. This was also done in the Teamster NMFA (freight contract) of last year, but carhaul is a much more unionized and profitable industry.

"Hoffa is trying to take credit for this contract, but it was the BAs who used to be carhaulers who did the work on it. We had the companies against the wall. The Big 3 didn't want a strike. We didn't take advantage of that to win changes in the grievance procedure. A contract doesn't mean squat if the members can't win grievances to enforce it."

David Lane
Local 89, Allied, Bowling Green Ky.

The wage increase of 0-50¢-50¢-50¢ is a 7.6 percent increase, or an average of 1.9 percent a year. The mileage pay increase is also 7.6 percent. The increase in the total package, which is $3.30 over four years, averages 2.95 percent a year.

The low economic package was considered a win for management. Indeed, the American Trucking Associations' *Transport Topics* boasted that it was below average for all union settlements this year. The *Wall Street Journal* listed the wage and benefit package as a management victory.

The economic package, in percentage terms, is inferior to the 1992 and 1995 packages.

In the 1992 carhaul contract, the wage increase was 9.93 percent over four years. The total economic package was 15.07 percent. So the 1992 contract monetary settlement was 25 percent larger than 1999 on a percentage basis.

In the 1995 carhaul contract, the wage and benefit package was 12.7 percent over four years. So the 1995 contract monetary settlement was also better than 1999.

Management came away from the table in 1999 with a relatively cheap settlement, in a booming economic period for the industry.

Pension Improvements

The union leadership has claimed, in reaction to negative comments about the first year wage freeze, that they won significant pension improvements for those under the Central States Pension Plan.

The pension provisions of the carhaul contract have traditionally tracked the freight contract. In 1998 freight Teamsters won benefit increases, and thus carhaul Teamsters were assured of at least matching them.

In this agreement a slight adjustment bump was made for a small group of potential retirees. While Central States Teamsters in freight can retire with $2,000 for 25-and-out, and $2,500 for 25-at-age-57, the carhaul contract lowers that age to 55.

Secondly, there is a prescription coverage benefit (in Central States) for retirees who come under Medicare after age 65. Since President Clinton is expected to introduce legislation to provide a form of prescription coverage under Medicare, the impact of this benefit in the long run remains to be seen.

These two benefits were purchased with 35¢ of the monetary package noted above. The pension improvements in the 1992 and 1995 contract era were somewhat more substantial.

New Protections

In 1992 the Teamsters Union, with the involvement of thousands of members, led a corporate campaign against Ryder Systems, then the largest car carrier in the country. This campaign was so successful that the American Trucking Associations, backed by such anti-labor politicians as Congressman Peter Hoekstra (R-Mich.) sponsored legislation to attempt to outlaw such campaigns.

The campaign won a breakthrough, the Work Preservation Agreement (WPA), which, for the first time, tied the corporate holding company of each carrier to the contract, thus combating "double breasting." While this cancer has not been completely eradicated, the WPA breakthrough is an effective tool in curtailing it and saving the unionized carhauling industry.

First, the union agreed to allow the "flex work week" for mechanics and shop employees in the Central-Southern area. The new clause provides for a two-tier set of conditions, with only new employees subject to the Thursday to Sunday workweek. The union leadership and the employers have emphasized the fact that this only applies to new-hires, but it will destroy overtime work for senior employees (which many shop employees rely on as part of their income). And it represents a foot in the door which very possibly will end up involving the end of any time-off protections for all in the industry. That's the way most concessions spread.

"We need a contract that addresses carhauler concerns, but we didn't get it. A lot of carhaulers are worn out after 25 years. Hoffa promised a 25-and-out at any age. What happened?

That $1,500 bonus is a buyoff, pure and simple. There's no reason in strong economic times in our best contract to have a bonus instead of a real wage increase. Plus the concession put on the mechanics is a bad sign of what's to come."

M. C. Jordan
Local 528, Allied, Atlanta

Also, the 1992-95 contracts placed new protections for the rights of individual Teamster members into the contract for the first time. The grievance procedure was changed to provide for "innocent till proven guilty," and a new "grievant's bill of rights."

The 1999 carhaul agreement does not contain any such big breakthroughs, which protect and expand union strength, or protect individual Teamsters' rights. It does contain improvements in Article 48 of the Central-Southern Supplement in that members on layoff cannot be made to work out of other terminals for up to two weeks, and other minor improvements such as including grandparents and grandchildren for approved funeral leave.

Concessions or Give-Backs

The 1992 and 1995 contracts did not contain any concessions or give-backs. Needless to say, this was not because management did not demand any.

The difference is that in 1999, the leadership gave the employers some of what they wanted.

The employers also won a new Sunday to Thursday night-shift workweek for drivers in the Western States.

Hoffa promised he would win more time-off protections. Instead he gave concessions to make the situation worse.

In addition, a concession was made to the employers to allow for the expansion of half-rate backhauls to acquire new business. It will allow easier access to half-rate deals, by giving the employers a 30-day period when they can impose the deals before a vote is taken.

Conclusion

The 1999 contract falls short of the last two in monetary package (wage and benefit) percentage improvements, the contract brings in the bonus and wage freeze concept, brings back concessions to the carhaul bargaining agenda, and contains no new breakthroughs.

	1991[1] Settlement	1995 Settlement	1999 Settlement
Wage Increase	9.9% over 4 years	7.6% over 4 years	7.6%[2] over 4 years
Total Package (wages, pension, and H&W)	15.1% over 4 years	12.7% over 4 years	11.9% over 4 years
Concessions	No	No	**Yes.** Flex workweek for mechanics in Central/South. Sun.-Thurs. bids in West. New expansion of half rates with 30-day period before a vote.
Breakthroughs to strengthen union power or individual rights	First-ever Work Preservation Agreement to curtail double breasting and preserve union strength. Innocent Until Proven Guilty and Grievant's Bill of Rights		Minor improvements but no breakthroughs.

1. The 1991 agreement was actually bargained in 1992, after William McCarthy failed to produce a contract acceptable to carhaulers.
2. The monetary percentages here are identical to those produced by the Hoffa administration with one exception — they count the wage freeze and bonus in the first year as exactly equal to a 72¢/hr. (or 3.7¢ per loaded mile) wage hike! This is neither valid nor honest, as a bonus is a one-time payment and does not increase the wage base a cent.

Teamsters sift bylaw proposal

By JOE WARD
The Courier-Journal

Members of Kentucky's largest union local — the 16,000-member Teamsters 89 based in Louisville — will vote today on bylaw changes proposed by a dissident group that hopes to use them to unseat union leaders.

The group says the bylaw changes would virtually ensure its candidates' victory in the next election — and says that, if elected, those candidates would "end ridiculous salaries, perks and pensions" enjoyed by local union leaders.

But unseating the leadership won't be easy.

Local 89 has been dominated for decades by a sort of dynasty launched by Paul Priddy in 1952 and maintained by Priddy's successors as president — Marion Winstead, Norman Hug and Lon Fields.

Winstead's son, Robert Winstead, became president of the local last December, succeeding Fields. Priddy's son, Charles Priddy, and Hug's son, Gary Hug, also have been on the local's payroll.

One or two of the local's officers usually are on a list of Teamsters leaders around the country who are paid more than $100,000 a year.

The list is published annually by a national dissidents' group called Teamsters for a Democratic Union.

Often, at least two officials in the local are paid more than the international presidents of such other unions as the Auto Workers and the Electronic workers.

Local 89 represents employees of hundreds of companies across the state. United Parcel Service workers have come to dominate the local in numbers, with about 5,200 members, and a couple of members from UPS have sought to use that fact to change the local's direction.

Fred Stephens, a UPS employee who is running against Winstead for president this year, has charged that the Winstead faction stays in power by underhanded means.

For example, he says elections are held in December, when overtime requirements and family obligations reduce the number of members who can participate. And the voting, Stephens said, is always done at the union hall, at 3813 Taylor Blvd.

The location is hard for some out-of-town members to reach — except, according to Stephens, when local officers bus in people they know will vote for them.

Stephens said there also is an "intimidation factor" at the hall that makes some members uncomfortable with speaking out against the leadership, or showing up to vote against it.

The changes to be voted on today would move the election to October and permit voting by mail.

In a recent campaign letter, Stephens said a victory on the bylaw changes "will virtually guarantee success in the election" for the dissident slate of candidates, known as the United Rank & File Slate.

Two calls to the local yesterday morning and afternoon failed to reach Robert Winstead, the local's president.

Stephens said he thinks his group's campaign is "going pretty well."

Under Vincent Meredith, who is now retired, a forerunner of Stephens' group gave the local's leaders a run for their money in 1991 when locals elected delegates to the Teamsters international convention. Though they failed to elect even one delegate, they sent a message that they say caused then-president Norman Hug to open up the local and become more responsive to member needs.

The group made noises about running a candidate against Hug in 1990 but didn't manage to get one into the field.

Stephens' effort seems somewhat better organized.

It plans a golf scramble July 24 to raise money, and it also has T-shirt and bumper-sticker sales and raffles.

David Thornsberry, who is in charge of the fund raising, said thousands of dollars already have been raised.

THE COURIER-JOURNAL, Friday, June 11, 1999

Old Guard Defeats Democracy. The bylaws proposal to guarantee impartial mail ballot elections in Kentucky Local 89 was defeated in a concerted effort by over 20 union officials. They bussed in members and even brought non-members to vote. Some 300 members came to support democracy, but the officials turned out some 700 to defeat it.

The United Rank & File Committee of Local 89 is continuing to grow and taking the issues to the 16,000 members, who will vote this December for local officers.

Super Valu Buys Richfood.

The big keep getting bigger. Super Valu has announced that it will buy Richfood Holdings of Virginia for $1.5 billion. The purchase will boost Super Valu's revenue overall and make it the 11th largest retailer in the U.S. Retail expansion in the Mid-Atlantic area is one goal of the buyout. Super Valu will take over Shoppers Food Warehouse, Metro and Farm Fresh Markets. Richfood recently took a hit when C&S took over distribution for Giant Food Stores.

After Guilty Plea

Central States Fiduciary Abruptly Resigns

Bankers Trust abruptly resigned as one of two fiduciaries of the Central States Pension Fund, just a month after being appointed. No one at the fund will say why, according to the May 17 *Pensions & Investments*. When asked about it, Williams Nellis, the number two official of our $20 billion Central States Fund, replied with, "You're a liar. You're a liar. You're a liar." (Apparently he forgot to say "pants on fire.")

The resignation of Bankers Trust came after the firm paid a $60 million fine and pled guilty to fraud in a case that did not involve the pension fund.

So the Central States Fund is now looking for a replacement company to oversee investments of the members' pension money. Officials of Central States cited poor performance by Central States as the reason they hired Bankers Trust. Then came the sudden departure. And the members are being kept in the dark.

The Central States Fund is governed by 10 trustees, five from the employers and five from the union. The five so-called union reps include three former union officials, who all enjoy multiple pensions, and two current union officials, who enjoy multiple salaries.

The Central States Fund is under its own consent order, because of corruption that led to squandering millions of dollars of the members' money. Jimmy Hoffa went to prison for a scam involving the use of Central States money in a Florida land deal.

Safeway, AG, Super Valu

Washington Grocery Teamsters Make Gains

Washington State Teamsters made important gains in their master contract with major grocery companies.

The new contract covers 2,000 grocery Teamsters in the Seattle area.

The first tentative agreement recommended by the union leadership was rejected by the members, with a heavy No vote in Seattle Local 174 and split votes in locals 117, 313, and 599. The rejection led to improvements including protections for new hires in the wage progression, a subcontracting victory for Associated Grocers loads going to Oregon, and seniority language involving Market Food Service, a subsidiary of AG that was brought under the master contract.

The wage increase is 50¢-50¢-50¢-50¢ in a four year deal, with 60¢ into pensions on top of full maintenance of health benefits. For the first time in two decades there were no concessions in the contract.

Local 174 rank and file negotiators report that they did not win all the job protections they wanted, but felt they had gotten a good settlement and established a new level of membership unity.

The rank and file contract campaign not only put pressure on the companies but brought members together as well.

Nashville Teamsters Settle

After a month on the picket line, 300 Teamsters employed at Galaxy, the Kroger spin-off distribution center, are back at work. The resulting contract was a victory for the rank and file members, who held strong with no scabbing.

The company reportedly took major losses during the strike, and the strikers were able to hold on to health insurance for retirees.

The settlement also showed the need for more support than lip-service from the International Union. Early in the strike, James Hoffa was at a political rally in Nashville and announced he would give all-out support to the strikers, including a national boycott of Kroger. Nothing was ever done. The strikers were left on their own.

As a result the strikers were able to hold off some of the company's demands for concessions, but could not win job protections they were fighting for, and had to settle for tiny wage increases.

Get *Convoy Dispatch* by the Bundle!

Spread the news. Get a bundle of *Convoy Dispatch* each issue to distribute.

Price per issue: ❑ 100-$12 ❑ 50-$8 ❑ 20-$5 ❑ 10-$3

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Return to: TDU, Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

Convoy Dispatch Editorial

'Organize or Die'

The Teamsters Union — and the labor movement — has to organize or die. That may sound extreme but we all know that in the long run it's true.

Why, then, is our International Union leadership shutting down organizing, and using our precious resources in the wrong direction?

The IBT has "downsized" organizing from over 30 organizers to 11. The best organizers were fired because of politics. This is in the name of saving money, but meanwhile Hoffa is handing out plenty of multiple salaries and holding lots of expensive media events and parties for himself, all on union funds.

Cutting organizing field staff to the bone is no way to build Teamster power.

Even worse, the resources we do have may end up misdirected. We need to organize in our core Teamster industries, such as trucking, warehousing, and food processing. Over the past few years, we have done that.

The Teamsters Union recently built a top notch organizing department with an aggressive approach, and it worked. We stopped losing members during the past five years. Not only did we turn that corner, but organizing has been targeted to make our union stronger, to protect our members. For example, for the first time we successfully organized thousands of Overnite Teamsters, started to organize the fruit warehousing industry in Washington and launched a drive at FedEx.

Right now the IBT has assigned its organizers to Overnite, but that appears to be a short term commitment.

Hoffa has told the media that he may emphasize health care workers and public employees in organizing. International Vice President Chuck Mack says this is a good idea because hospital workers are easier to organize than transportation workers. But Mack's joint council just lost a large hospital drive by two to one.

We cannot protect our members in our core industries by just expanding the dues income in unrelated fields. All Teamsters, including the Hoffa leadership, should be able to agree on two principles: we need to put more — lots more — resources into organizing, and we need to organize to build our union's strength. Those principles are much bigger than internal union politics.

Hoffa Puts Texas Local 19 into Trusteeship

On June 18 the International Union slapped a trusteeship on Airline Local 19, based in Dallas Texas and headed by J. D. Potter. The announcement of the trusteeship stated that Potter had resigned. The action raises important questions regarding the future of the 3,500 members, including Continental and Southwest airline mechanics.

First, how could it be that just six months ago Hoffa felt that J.D. Potter was a leader of 1.4 million Teamsters? That was when Potter was a candate for International VP on Hoffa's slate. Now Hoffa charges that Potter is incapable of maintaining democratic principles, enforcing contracts, or even holding union meetings! Surely the members are owed more of an explanation than a press release.

Second, the real motive for the trusteeship has to be questioned. Just one week before the trusteeship, Hoffa learned that he was in political trouble in this local. When the votes were counted in the Southern rerun election for International vice president, Local 19's vote had changed dramatically. It went from two to one in favor of Hoffa last December, to three to two against Hoffa's candidate and for TDU member Doug Mims.

The handwriting was on the wall. Not only was Potter on the way out, thanks to IRB charges for laundering $5,000 in cash into Hoffa's campaign, but the members were getting active and informed.

So, just by coincidence (?), the local is put into trusteeship a week later. And Hoffa claims that the man he told us could lead the union could not even file grievances or properly hold union meetings.

Who will now be running Local 19 on a day-to-day basis? Mike Ellison was named Assistant Trustee to run the operation. Ellison's qualification is that he is the son-in-law of Charlie Haddock, the former head of Dallas Local 745 and the mentor of T.C. Stone, another ex-running mate of Hoffa's now expelled from our union for corruption.

It's time for Local 19 members to build a reform movement that can take take back this local when the post-trusteeship election must be held in 18 months or less.

Nepotism Returns to Chicago Local 714

Billy Hogan Jr., former Hoffa running mate and head of Chicago Local 714, is back in the union after a two-year absence.

Former President Ron Carey put Local 714 into trusteeship in August of 1997. The Independent Review Board, following an eight-month investigation, had just issued a 122-page report that concluded: "The local is not being run for the benefit of its members. The local is being run for the benefit of its principal officer William Hogan Jr., President James M. Hogan, Recording Secretary Robert Hogan and their family and friends."

Hogan stated in a 1991 campaign speech, "I am living proof that nepotism works."

Hogan was nominated as a candidate for General Secretary-Treasurer on Hoffa's slate in July of 1996, but later withdrew in favor of back-up candidate Tom Keegel.

Billy's son, now the head of Local 714, hired his dad to work for the local.

A June 9 column in the *Chicago Sun-Times* noted Hogan's return to the union and suggested that "Hogan's return to the union soon will be recognized by President Hoffa with a national title."

1999 TDU Convention

November 5-7

Sheraton Airport Hotel Cleveland

For more information, see future issues of Convoy Dispatch, or call TDU at 313-842-2600.

Hoffa's Ally Wins Southern Rerun

It was no surprise that Charlie Gardner, Hoffa's man, won the Southern Region rerun election for International Vice President. The outcome seemed predetermined by the low voter turnout of only 20 percent of the membership, down from 30 percent for the Southern Region in the 1998 International election.

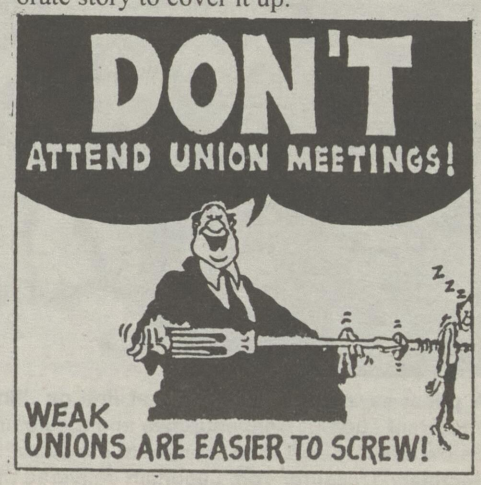
The reform candidate, Doug Mims, campaigned hard, taking the reform platform to the rank and file for weeks. Mims had an uphill task, running in a rerun for just one position against Hoffa's man.

Mims did surprisingly well in many locals. In fact, Mims won in the home locals of most of Hoffa's top Southern officials. Mims carried Tampa Local 79, headed by International Vice President Ken Wood. Mims also won in Atlanta Local 528, headed by Warehouse Director Ken Hilbish, and in airline Local 19, headed by Hoffa's former running mate, J.D. Potter. Mims increased his winning percentage over 1998 in several other key locals as well, and carried five of the nine Southern states on a strong reform platform.

During the course of the rerun, the Election Officer ruled that one of the chairs of the Southern multi-state grievance panel, Chuck Crawley, threatened to cause members to lose their jobs unless a business agent gave a $300 campaign contribution and endorsed Gardner. So far, Hoffa has taken no action to remove Crawley from the panels. The matter has been referred to the Independent Review Board for investigation.

Gardner won very heavily in Dallas Local 745 and in some other Texas locals, and took 54 percent of the overall vote. Considering that the low turnout benefitted the candidate backed by the officials, it was surprising that the winning margin for the Hoffa candidate went up only two percent from the 1998 vote.

The 1998 vote was overturned, and a rerun ordered, because Hoffa candidate J.D. Potter was caught laundering $5,000 into the campaign, then inventing an elaborate story to cover it up.



IBP Teamsters Stand Up for Workers and the Public

Iowa Beef Processing (IBP) workers in Pasco, Wash., are on strike for their own health and well being, but also for all of us. Strikers say that company speed-up means more than stress and injuries. They blame the excessive speed of the line for creating unsanitary working conditions in the plant, including meat that goes unwashed after falling on the floor and meat and cutting boards that are contaminated with oil from production lines. Workers in the slaughter department report that they do not have enough time to wash cow feces off of their hands before they have to handle the next piece of meat that comes down the line.

To address these problems, members are seeking new contract language that gives workers increased power to police unsafe and unsanitary conditions. Workers also reported these problems to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) at rallies in Portland, Seattle and Pasco on June 23. Workers called on the USDA to immediately send investigators to Pasco to interview workers about the conditions at the plant and to take corrective action.

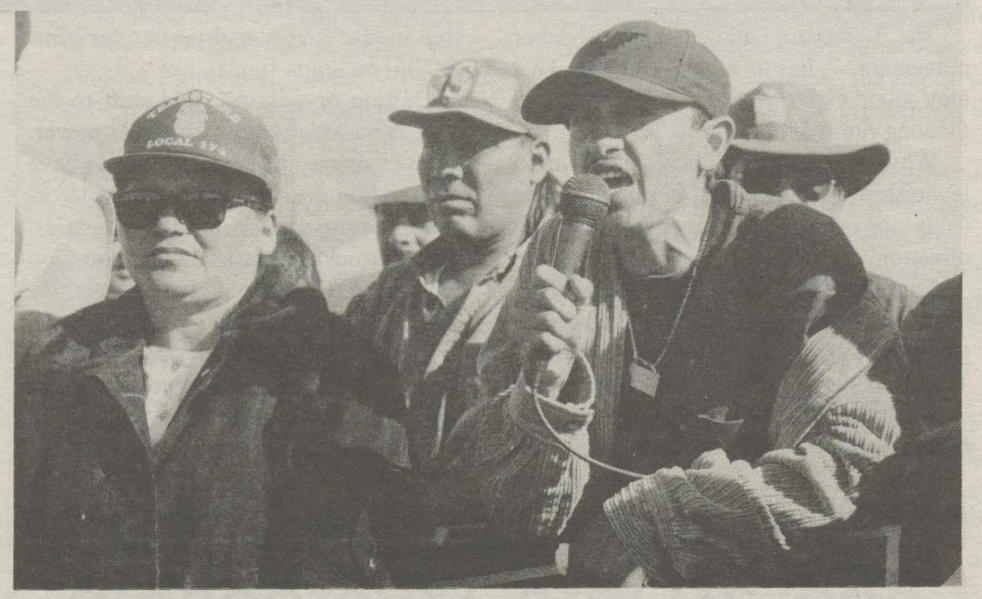
Members are also seeking fair wage increases. Processing workers at IBP's plant in Amarillo, Texas — where workers are also represented by the Teamsters — make more than $1 an hour more than workers in Pasco. In three years, workers in Amarillo will be making more than $1.50 more per hour than their counterparts in Pasco.

Pasco workers are demanding $1.50 in raises over three years — and more, because they have suffered a strike forced on them by IBP's disregard for safety and its unfair labor practices.

On June 17, the company made a so-called "last, best and final offer" that included inadequate wage increases and did not address members' safety and health concerns. Members voted it down by more than 90 percent. Now the company has threatened their workers with the possibility of permanent replacements.

Strike Is a Mass Movement

The strike is a mass movement in this community. On June 19, 2,000 strikers and supporters marched through downtown Pasco. Picket lines routinely draw hundreds of strikers. Religious leaders and the Latino community have provided support.



While members stand tough, strikers say that union officials have done little to help. Sometimes they've even catered to the company and to scabs who have crossed the picket line.

For example, strikers were angered that when the strike authorization vote was taken, the union leaders made special arrangements so that scabs could vote inside the plant instead of coming to the union rally. Instead of getting information on the strike, they got the company line.

Later, when union leaders insisted on voting management's inadequate proposal of June 17, they permitted the employer to join in the balloting. The company brought busses to the plant, staffed by supervisors, and herded the scabs, on company time, to the union hall. There the union had the scabs "re-join" the union they had just quit (waiving the re-initiation fee) and vote. The company then bussed them back to the plant. Workers demanded that the scabs' votes be put into a separate box, and since they could not have made a difference in the outcome, they were never counted.

Teamster Unity Needed

As *Convoy* goes to press, the strike is three weeks old and at a critical point. The company is threatening permanent replacements. The Teamster rank and file have stood strong; even chief negotiator Al Hobart stated he has never seen more determined Teamster strikers. But they need the full support of our International Union.

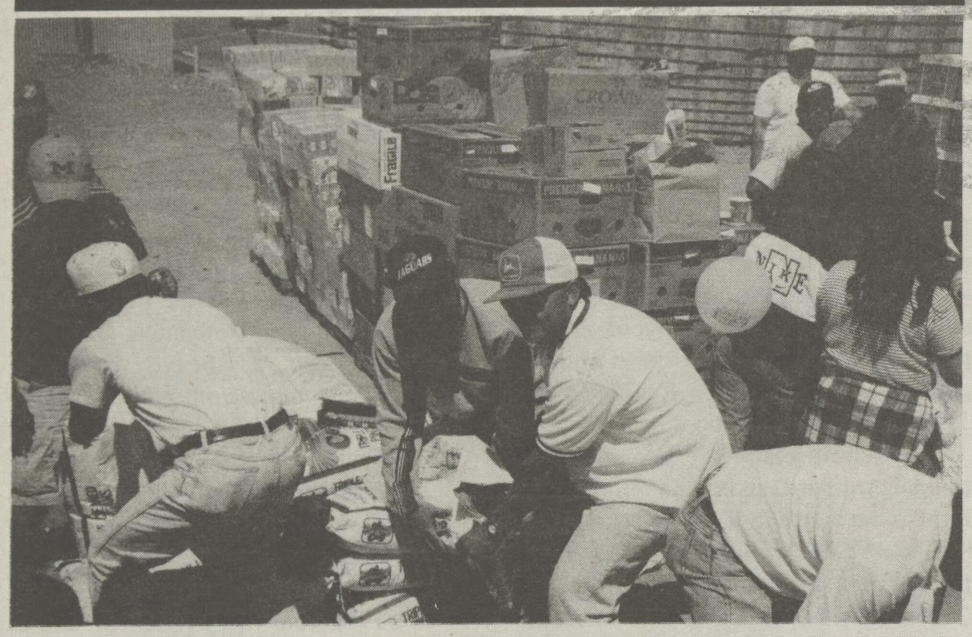
IBP can be taken on with a national strategic campaign, led by the Teamsters and involving other unions and community support. IBP's customers, major chain stores, can be targeted to put pressure on IBP to settle. A meeting of locals at other IBP plants is needed to coordinate support.

The power of our International Union can help these Teamsters take on this corporation in their fight for justice and for all food processing Teamsters. That's what Teamster unity should mean.

"We don't want games played with this struggle," said striker Melquiades Pereyra. "We're fighting for our lives. We need the union to give us 100 percent backing so that we can win this strike."

"We are fighting for respect and dignity," said striker Petra González. "We're asking the Teamster officials to join us in our battle for justice."

Labor and Community Support



A priest says mass on the picket line on June 10 (top photo). The strikers have received important support from churches and the community.
Below, strikers sort food brought to the picket line from Local 206 in Portland, Ore. Local 206 Secretary-Treasurer Tom Leedham delivered the food and messages of solidarity.

New York Local 814

Movers Weighed Down by Employer Intimidation Campaign

During recent contract negotiations, Teamster movers in New York City Local 814 fought hard to prevent the gutting of an important provision in their contract.

Association management proposed the creation of a new class of "apprentice" members. The apprentices would be allowed to get work ahead of industry men who work as needed for different employers. Many industry members have years of service and experience and should by rights get work and permanent positions ahead of lower seniority employees.

Rank and file pressure led to a rejection of the contract the first time around. Unfortunately, management refused to budge. Instead they began a campaign of intimidation, holding captive meetings with individual members.

Local 814 didn't file unfair labor practice charges against the association or intervene to counter the pressure tactics. So, in the end management was able to force through their contract.

Members are investigating legal action and considering the future. A rank and file committee is needed to stop these and other setbacks.

Teamster Democracy in Action

NWA Contract Being Debated

Copies of the tentative agreement reached between Northwest Airlines and the negotiating committee for Teamsters Local 2000 are on their way to the 11,000 flight attendants who will study and discuss the deal before voting. The Local's Executive Board agreed to send the proposed five-year contract to the members, but did not give a recommendation. Discussions of the tentative agreement are scheduled for all the bases in the coming weeks and a vote is likely in late July.

Just days before the agreement was reached at the table, an incredible 93 percent of members voted on strike authorization, with 99 percent of them voting Yes. Rallies were held at bases around the country to send the message "Please release us from mediation." (The National Mediation Board must "release" unions under the Railway Labor Act before they can legally strike.) Many members were shocked by the timing of the deal, believing the next marching orders they would get would be to prepare for HAVOC, a selective strike.

"We've seen the highlights, and there are some really good things in the proposal, but there are some bad things that aren't being talked about. We're getting the facts out there so people can make an informed decision."

—Seattle CAT coordinator Andy Damis

In Seattle, flight attendants called a rank and file meeting after the agreement was announced and 100 turned out, some coming from other bases. "People were asking, 'what happened?' " says Seattle CAT coordinator Andy Damis.

"People are wondering why we didn't call for impasse," says Damis. "The pump was primed. If this was the best they could do, why didn't we request an impasse?" Damis points to the recent deal at America West, saying, "They were looking at an offer with $50 million in improvements, but after a 30-day cooling off period the company came back with an $80 million offer. That's more than a 50 percent increase from pre- to post-impasse, and they're an itty-bitty company."

Phoenix CAT coordinator Kaki Androsiuk says, "I truly believe this is a Teamster International contract, pressured by the International for our negotiators to sign. Why else would the International be spending the kind of money they are to market this? And why are they doing an 'informal' phone poll to see how the flight attendants are going to vote?"

Mobilizing Success

During the past year of bargaining talks, rank and file members have led an unprecedented mobilization effort as the union's Contract Action Team (CAT). The CAT built a highly successful member-to-member network that was responsible for airport rallies, customer outreach, and preparing members to potentially strike. TDU helped Local 2000 in developing the CAT program.

Now the members are continuing their involvement with discussion of the contract and the ratification process. Damis says he has started going through the contract and is compiling a list of the "lowlights." He says, "We've seen the highlights, and there are some really good things in the proposal, but there are some bad things that aren't being talked about. We're getting the facts out there so people can make an informed decision."

One of the bad things, Damis points out, is an increase in mandatory working hours, or "flex up" — essentially overtime hours without overtime pay. The number of hours was increased from five to eight.

Retirement 'Not Enough'

CAT coordinator Kristi Valenzuela says, "People are saying they don't need to read anything else. The retirement is not enough." The proposal would increase the retirement formula from $35 per year of service to $55 for the first four years of the contract, and then to $62.50 the fifth year. This is bad news to senior flight attendants who have been waiting to retire.

Stephanie Bylin, a senior flight attendant in Detroit, is among the bigger losers if the deal passes. "I was sick when I saw the retirement proposal," said Bylin. Those who worked with Republic Airlines before it merged with Northwest, like Bylin, received a one-time lump sum payment when their pension plan was bought out. Because of this payment, they have an "offset" which greatly reduces any pension they would get from Northwest. Bylin's payment was only $5,000 which can't make up for what she'll be denied in Northwest's plan. A key retirement demand was to eliminate these offsets for people who were merged into Northwest, but only slight reductions were negotiated. "People won't be able to retire," says Bylin. "Why should one group have to suffer so much?"

Minneapolis CAT coordinator Anne Meyer is telling people to read the agreement. She says, "People on the line are saying they are disappointed that the negotiators couldn't get more. I don't think any flight attendant is going to be happy with this contract if they still have to take on a second job to make ends meet."

"They went back 30 years with this agreement and gave up things we won years ago," says flight attendant Connie Mason-Harper. "We've waited three years for industry standards and now we won't get them for five years. What will the standard be then?"

The workers gave Northwest concessions in 1993 to save the company from bankruptcy. Since then, Northwest profits are up 325 percent and CEOs have received millions in salaries and perks. Meanwhile, airline customers have launched class action suits against declining service, and Northwest is finding it tough to recruit new hires.

The union negotiating committee members are urging members to hold off taking a stand until they hear the committee presentations at the "roadshow" meetings at all 10 bases. Their position is that they got all they could without a strike, and that the settlement will provide an industry-leading standard.

Hoffa Administration Tactics

While members are waiting to see the full agreement, and union representatives are still trying to digest it, the Hoffa administration is already selling it to the press and the members.

"What I find so interesting," says San Francisco CAT coordinator Amy Morton, "is that Mr. Hoffa immediately came out in favor of the contract, yet I am sure I could safely say that he hasn't even read it!"

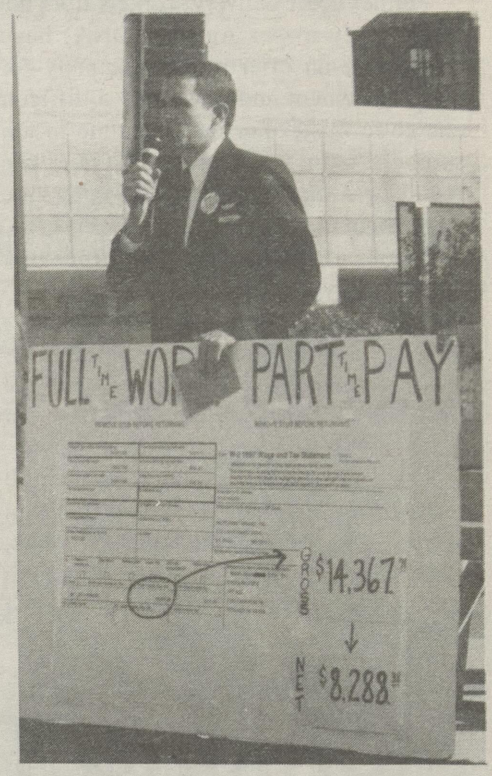
The International Union holds the bargaining rights for Local 2000, even though the local union has all 11,000 flight attendants in it.

Now the International is using an old-guard heavy sell approach, that conflicts with the more democratic style that Local 2000 uses.

International officials like Airline Director Ray Benning are using standard scare tactics such as "if you vote no it will take another nine months," "you'll never get to impasse," or "the International won't provide the funding to continue bargaining." International Union attorney Roland Wilder has said he's not going back to the table and ruining his reputation.

Benning even threatened an audit of Local 2000, just by "coincidence" after some officers and base reps questioned some of the terms of the proposed contract.

The International mailed a sales brochure to all 11,000 members without any officers of Local 2000 even being aware of it. On a mid-June flight Hoffa himself passed out a three page pitch on the contract which ends with a list of threats if the contract is voted down (that sound like the company wrote them!).



Northwest flight attendants rallied across the country after voting to authorize a strike. A junior flight attendant in Detroit displayed his tax form.

Other threats are coming from Hoffa's camp too. After Hoffa fired field service staff from the campaign, he sent replacements who used some heavy-handed tactics and disrespected Local 2000 leadership. At the recent Detroit airport rally, Teamsters Joint Council 43 President Larry Brennan threatened base representative Bob Krabbe and Secretary-Treasurer Danny Campbell, telling them to "get rid of that **** lawyer," referring to Local 2000 attorney Barbara Harvey with disgusting sexual epithets. Krabbe said, "It shows that they only believe in local union autonomy when you do as they say, and it shows they don't respect our elected leadership (who hired Harvey)."

Building for the Future

The flight attendants have shown they are committed to getting the contract they feel they deserve, and to democratic discussion of the pros and cons of the offer. Members have gotten more involved, more informed, and more united than ever before. In the process, Local 2000 has turned itself into a real union.

The old guard Teamster leaders are not comfortable with this large local, 80 percent women, charting its own course. But they may have to get used to it. Continuing the member involvement and maintaining the network that the CAT built will insure a strong local union into the future.

Four-Year Lock-out Event Planned

Detroit Newspapers: Deal or Betrayal?

Former home delivery workers from the Detroit Newspaper Agency (DNA) have been made an offer by the company for early retirement and now have a difficult choice to make. For the first time in the sporadic talks with Local 372 over the four-year strike/lock-out, fired workers are included in the offer.

Six local unions initially struck the DNA on July 13, 1995.

For the Teamsters who have been battling the Gannett newspaper giant, this offer is another move to chip away at the workers' solidarity and determination for justice in this defining newspaper dispute.

The deal would allow workers with 20 years to retire at an 80 percent pension payout, with full payout after 25 years, down from a 30 year eligibility. There are 180 workers who qualify for the deal, 31 of whom are fired workers. To take the deal, the fired workers have to sign off on back pay they might get as a result of a lawsuit.

With the lawsuit now pending, the workers could each get $100,000 or more if they win.

For many of the fired workers, their eligibility dates go back further than the date of the company's unconditional offer, so they would stand to get the most money.

Chipping Away Solidarity

"It's paying off one half to sell out the other half," says Dennis Nazelli, a locked-out member. "Some people were fired just for picketing."

The workers fear they're being carved up so few will be left to carry out the fight. The local leadership is pushing the deal "for the sake of the fired workers," but would not answer questions about how close any overall settlement may be due to a blackout on the talks. "People want to know about progress to decide whether to accept this side offer," says Nazelli.

No one knows how long a court settlement could take either. The NLRB found the company guilty in August 1998. Appeals are slated for spring or summer next year in Washington, D.C., District Court.

Locked-out member Bob Zvonek, with 20 years at DNA, told *Convoy Dispatch*, "If I had been told how this strike would end, I would have told you that no one gives up four years of their lives and gets nothing in return. We all feel betrayed."

The union brothers and sisters recognize that for the fired workers, this is an opportunity they may need to take for their families.

IBT Doesn't Respond

It's not clear where the International is going with this battle. After all the new administration's hype in the press, a slow sellout may be coming down the pike.

Jon Rabine, Hoffa's Western Region Vice President, was in Detroit for several days of talks with the company. Members of locals 372 and 2040 tried to schedule a meeting with him during his visit, but he ignored their letter and repeated phone calls.

The workers wanted to talk with Rabine about reassigning special projects staffer Mike Zielinski back to the Detroit newspaper lock-out struggle. Zielinski was fired by Hoffa and the workers launched a campaign to get Zielinski back. The workers credit the success in cutting newspaper sales to Zielinski's strategic know-how and commitment.

Anniversary in Detroit

Continued activity and support of the Workers Justice Committee remains key in this fight. Plans are underway for the biggest anniversary event yet on Tuesday, July 13 in Detroit. Nationally, the workers have asked AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to promote pickets at Gannett and Knight Ridder papers across the country. The anniversary message is "Obey the Law, Bring Back the Locked Out Detroit-Newspaper Workers!"

For anniversary event information, contact: Dennis Nazelli, IBT Local 372 at 313-964-5655, ext. 120.

Los Angeles Local 630

Fishking Teamsters Fight 'Point System'

"Some of our people have been here for 30 years," said Milton Esquivel, a Fishking employee and Local 630 member. "It's unfair to impose this kind of program that's going to cost them their jobs. This is not about attendance. It is nothing less than an attempt to get rid of high seniority workers who have earned vacations and other benefits and replace us with new hires they get from employment agencies. This is intolerable and we'll do whatever we have to in order to stop it."

Fishking Processors is a seafood packaging company that employs over 300 Teamsters, mostly Spanish-speaking and female, in Los Angeles. When management unilaterally implemented a new no-fault attendance policy that was so harsh that it put everyone's jobs in jeopardy, the rank and file began organizing to fight back.

Having failed to get Local 630 to take their complaints seriously, the members took matters into their own hands. At the regular June local union meeting, every day-shift employee (over 150) crammed into the small meeting hall. They also brought a petition signed by every night shift employee.

The officers first tried to put them off by saying they would go through the regular agenda and deal with the Fishking workers' problems after the meeting. But the angry workers were having none of that.

Despite protests from the local officers that the large attendance violated fire department regulations, these newly active Teamsters stood their ground. They refused to leave and forced the officers to address their concerns. They let the local know that it was their obligation to make the company negotiate over this mid-contract change.

They also told the union how the company had been illegally charging them with absences in violation of both the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the FMLA clause of their contract. They demanded that the local provide educational classes about their rights under the FMLA. The local finally relented and agreed to ask the Department of Labor to provide a class on their FMLA rights.

The following week the workers met with Local 630 Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Vercruse. Again there was a massive rank and file attendance. Vercruse offered to take the issue to arbitration; but the members objected, noting that arbitration was the final step of the grievance procedure and the local had failed thus far even to perform the first step.

Members Demand to Be Included in Negotations

Finally, Vercruse promised to enter into negotiations with the company, but the Fishking workers were not content to have their futures determined in secret meetings between the local and the company. They demanded to be part of the process by electing two people from each of the three departments to be part of the negotiations and to serve as their stewards. When Vercruse tried to put such an election off to a later date, the members said, "No way, everybody's here now. Let's do it." And they did!

As *Convoy* went to press the struggle to defeat the attendance policy continues.

Standing Up to a Legacy of Corruption

Casuals Take Action at Crowley American Transport

"We will not accept that we are nobody." This is the message that casuals at Crowley American Transport in Fort Everglades, Fla., are sending to management, Local 390 and the International Union. Crowley, which operates the port, uses dozens of casuals, often working more casuals than regular Teamsters.

Crowley routinely ignores seniority in hiring and work assignments for casuals. Nepotism is the rule and it is not uncommon for low seniority casuals to get hired over the heads of casuals with seven or more years seniority.

Casuals Lose Holiday Pay

Recently Crowley gave casuals another kick in the face by eliminating their holiday pay. In the past they received time-and-a-half for holidays. No more. Some members hear that a deal was cut between Local 390 and Crowley to give up the pay. True or not, the local has failed so far to file grievances or take any action over the loss of this past practice.

The casuals have sent a petition to Local 390 and the International demanding that action be taken. They also took time off to go as a delegation to the union hall. After waiting for a meeting they were told that "nothing could be done."

The current situation at Crowley is a legacy of years of corruption and poor leadership on the part of Local 390 officials. Recently, members formed a Miami area TDU chapter that is setting its sights on changing this sorry state of affairs once and for all.

TDU Meets

Northern California TDU
Saturday, July 10, 10 a.m.
Steering Committee Election
Dimond Branch, Oakland Public Library
Fruitvale and MacArthur
For information call 707-426-5310

Rocky Mountain TDU
Saturday, July 10, 2 p.m.
1280 28th St., suite 10
Boulder, Col.
For information call 303-449-4482

Southern California TDU
Sunday, August 1, 10 a.m.
VFW Hall
101 S. Main St., Pomona, Calif.
For information call 562-694-5831 or 760-951-4949

Wisconsin Badger State TDU
Meeting and Picnic
Saturday, August 14, 12:30 p.m.
2750 S. 72nd St.
West Allis, Wis.
For information call 414-483-2652

Sexual Harassment: Knowing It and Stopping It

Teamsters can strengthen our union on the shopfloor if we can recognize harassment and deal with it swiftly at our workplaces. Women are far more likely victims of sexual harassment. By educating and taking action, our locals can gain the trust and participation of women members, and show management we insist on respect for all members..

"I just want to be able to work like anyone else." This is what a Teamster member recently told TDU when she described the sexual harassment she has endured from a co-worker at UPS. What victims want is for the harassing behavior to end and to be able to perform their jobs like everyone else.

What Is It?

Sexual Harassment involves behavior that is sexual in nature and considered offensive and unwanted by the victim.

Sexual harassment is against Federal law, many state and local laws, and the Teamster Constitution. The Federal Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1991 prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace and allow for reinstatement, back pay and the right to sue for compensatory and punitive damages.

Reporting sexual harassment is not about getting money. Less than 7 percent of women who have been sexually harassed take legal action. Legal action is typically a last resort since cases are long, difficult, and costly for a victim.

There are two main types of workplace sexual harassment as defined by law.

Quid pro quo. This is when something is demanded in exchange for something else. You must comply to certain conduct as a condition of employment or advancement. It involves someone who has power over your job, like the boss or a supervisor. An example is when a boss insists on an intimate get-together or you'll have no chance for a promotion. Or, only the women who flirt with the supervisor get the choice shifts or lighter-duty work.

Hostile environment. This is when a co-worker, supervisor or someone else harasses you because of your gender, affecting your ability to perform your job or creating an intimidating or offensive working environment. The employer is responsible for the actions of contractors, vendors and customers, too. This is the most common form of harassment.

What Behavior?

Conduct that is offensive and unwanted includes (but is not limited to):

- Persistent requests for a date or sexual "favors" (even when joking).
- Touching, stalking, sexual gestures.
- Explicit jokes, lewd and abusive language, demeaning comments, spreading sexual rumors.
- "Checking out" or staring, sexual comments about someone's clothing or anatomy.
- Pinups (bikinis or nude), graffiti, displaying sexual objects.
- Sexual actions or assault.
- Ask yourself: "What if this were happening to my daughter, wife, sister, or mother?"

Unwanted Attention ... Not Just Flirting

How a woman perceives a behavior — the impact — is what matters, not the man's intent.

What may be "all in fun" to the guys often makes a woman feel uncomfortable, trapped into having to go along with it, and like a sexual object instead of a respected, equal co-worker.

Some actions are severe enough that once is all it takes to be sexual harassment, like touching oneself in a sexual way or showing one's body. Other conduct is considered harassment if it is repeated or persistent, and the victim has let the offender know it is unwanted.

Health and Safety Issue

Sexual harassment is a health and safety issue due to the daily stress of uncomfortable or threatening situations. Harassed women dread and fear being at work. They are also unable to perform their jobs. If the harassment is not stopped, women often develop illnesses and are more susceptible to injury on the job, both causing women to miss work and sometimes lose their jobs.

HI YA, SWEET LIPS, HOW 'BOUT A KISS?
NO!
THEN HOW 'BOUT A DATE!!
NO!
WELL, CAN I GIVE YOU A HAND? HEH! HEH!
NO!
WHEN I SAY NO I MEAN NO!
SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS ANTI-WORKER!
KONOPACKI ©1991 HUCK/KONOPACKI LABOR CARTOONS

Why Women?

Women in the workforce are still not valued equally. On average, women make much less than men for similar or even the same work, especially in nonunion positions. Women often feel they have to take what is dished out by the boss, or must go along with sexually offending behavior in order to get along at work. Women are also often underrepresented in union leadership.

Who's Responsible?

The employer is ultimately responsible for keeping a work environment harassment-free, no matter what the source of harassment. The union is responsible to investigate all incidents of harassment and has the duty to fairly represent the members on both sides of any claim. It's in the union's best interest to educate all members about harassment and try to resolve the issue between parties internally.

What Stewards, Officers, and Members Should Do

- Listen to and support victim; speak out against problems.
- Investigate and seek resolution acceptable to victim.
- Educate the membership — use newsletters, workshops, union meetings, shopfloor actions.
- Add language to your contract and by-laws.
- Start a Women's Committee and encourage women to come to meetings and run for office.

What Victims Should Do

- **Prepare Yourself.** Get copies of anything in writing about the quality of your work, especially if you are being harassed by a supervisor. He may try to claim your work was poor.
- **Say No to the Harasser.** Be clear. Be public about rejecting the behavior when possible. If your co-worker makes sexual innuendos as he passes by you, say loudly: *"You Wanna Do What? I'm Not Interested."* Put your rejection in writing. Ask a steward to accompany you to confront the harasser.
- **Keep records.** Always write down incidents and ask any witnesses to sign your statement.
- **Go to the union right away.** Find out internal union procedures and file a grievance. Remember, the company is responsible for co-worker harassment. By not telling the company, you risk losing any court case.
- **Get support.** Seek other possible victims out. Seek out supportive co-workers and alert them to look out for offending behavior, to be your witness. Talk to friends. Contact area women's organizations.
- **Get legal advice.** The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Civil Rights Commission can help. Know the deadlines under the laws. Lawsuits can be long and costly, but compensatory and punitive damages are possible.

Note: This article is introductory. To deal with an actual case of sexual harassment, you should consult further resources. See suggestions in box at left.

Help Available from TDU

Workshops available. Hold a workshop at a union meeting or with a small group of members. Request a workshop as part of the remedy to your case. Topics include: Fighting Harassment and Discrimination, Building Women's Participation in the Union, Speaking Up at Union Meetings, Writing Newsletters, Organizing a Women's or Education Committee, Legal Rights, Running for Office, Building Support for Your Issues.

Sexual Harassment Information Packet. Available from TDU, includes resources list, sample letters to harasser, legal deadlines, organizing tips.

Call TDU at 313-842-2600.

THE REEMPLOYMENT RULE

"Can I go back to work after I retire and still keep my pension benefits?"

What's the general rule?

In the largest Teamster plans like the Central States Pension Fund, the Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Fund, and the New England Teamsters Pension Plan, the reemployment rule is most strict before you reach your "Normal Retirement Age" (usually age 65, age 64 in New England). Each plan reads differently, but they all use three basic criteria to determine if they will cut off your pension benefits when you go back to work:

- ***Your job is in the same industry covered by your pension plan.*** As a Teamster, "same industry" means not only any company that contributes to your pension fund, but also any company that is or could be covered by a Teamster contract.
- ***Your job is in the same trade or craft that you worked in while earning pension credits.*** This means your old job and also any supervisory jobs related to your old job description.
- ***Your job is in the same geographic area covered by your pension plan.*** Often this area is even larger than the specific states covered by the plan.

There are some exceptions here. For example, in the Western Conference Plan you can work in these kind of jobs, but for no more than 49 hours a month. In Central States, you can work as much as you want in some specifically listed jobs, such as service station attendant, school bus driver or security guard (as long as it's not for a contributing employer).

What happens after I reach my Normal Retirement Age?

After you reach your Normal Retirement Age, the rules relax a bit. you can return to work in the same industry, trade or craft or geographic area, but you can only work a maximum of forty hours per month (49 hours in the West).

After you reach age 70 1/2, Federal law requires that the reemployment rule doesn't apply anymore. You can work as much as you want at any job you want without losing your pension benefits.

I'm a Teamster official. Do I get special treatment?

Absolutely! Neither the Teamster Affiliates Pension Plan (for local union officials and staff) nor the Family Plan (for International officials and staff) have these rules. If you're covered under one of these plans, the only thing you can't do is go back to work as a Teamster official. Under these rules, you can make out like Hoffa supporter and former $200,000 Club member Bob Simpson, who is collecting his Teamster pensions while working as a management consultant for Teamster employers!

How can I find out if a job I'm considering could cause me to lose my pension?

You're supposed to contact your pension fund in writing to tell them what kind of job you're considering. Then they're supposed to issue a decision telling you if your job falls under the reemployment rule or not.

Of course, this can easily take months. On the other hand, working without telling the fund can be risky: the fund can freeze your benefits while they investigate your case. If they find that your job falls under the reemployment rule, you could be required to refund the benefits you had already received before the fund found out you had returned to work.

The best thing to do is seek legal advice before filling out any forms for your fund related to reemployment. Every case is different, and you could be denied benefits unfairly simply because of how you word your job description, even if you job is perfectly legal under the fund's regulations.

Remember, this is just a general overview of the reemployment rule, and the rules are slightly different for each Teamster pension plan. Contact TDU for further information or guidance on how to obtain information for your specific plan.

TDU - YOUR SOURCE FOR PENSION INFORMATION